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**Natural Resources, Ecology &  
Parks Committee**

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**SSB 6161**

**Brief Description:** Concerning group fishing permits.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senator Oke).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Authorizes the Department of Fish and Wildlife to issue group fishing permits to groups participating in outdoor education programs.

**Hearing Date:** 2/16/06

**Staff:** Amy Van Horn (786-7168).

**Background:**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) conducts many special youth fishing events, mostly in April, May, and June. In partnership with a number of outdoor recreation organizations, the Department operates a "Go Play Outside" program to encourage outdoor activities and education. Partners in "Go Play Outside" include the Puget Sound Anglers, the Association of Washington School Principals, and the Washington Wildlife Coalition. "Go Play Outside" includes a youth fishing initiative.

Fishing licenses are not required for people who are 14 or younger. Fifteen-year-olds must have a youth license to fish, and anyone 16 or older must have a standard license. The Department offers fishing licenses for fishing in saltwater, freshwater, or both. Most fishing licenses are annual; however, temporary two-day licenses may be purchased by individuals or families.

The Department must issue seasonal, group fishing permits to state-operated or state-licensed nonprofit facilities or programs for citizens who are disabled, seriously ill, terminally ill, or senior citizens. The Commissioner of the Department is required to adopt rules for issuing group fishing permits.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department may set conditions and issue a group fishing permit to groups working in partnership with and participating in Department-sponsored outdoor education programs. The Director may apply a processing fee to such licenses.

The Director is no longer required to adopt rules that set conditions under which group fishing permits are issued, but may set such rules at his or her discretion.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.